

August 13, 2015

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Brian Houseal, Chair  
U.S. National Advisory Committee  
**Adirondack Council**  
**103 Hand Avenue, Suite 3**  
**Elizabethtown, NY 12932**

Dear Mr. Houseal,

On behalf of Administrator Gina McCarthy, I would like to thank you for the National Advisory Committee (NAC) letter of advice of May 12<sup>th</sup>, 2015 reporting on the forty-fourth meeting held on April 16-17, 2015 at the EPA Headquarters in Washington, D.C.. We appreciate the NAC's commitment to advance the mission of the CEC through the advice provided on tri-national environmental issues and their support to our Administrator.

It was a pleasure for Sylvia Correa, Senior Advisor for North American Affairs, to meet with those who attended the meeting in person. We value our relationship with the NAC committee members and the value brought on by the committee to the work of the CEC.

**Recommendations on Charge Question 1 (Draft Strategic Plan 2015-2020 and Draft Operational Plan 2015-2016):**

- (1) *Redesign Projects #12 & #13 to address the highest priority threats to the monarch butterfly, especially the loss of milkweed habitat due to the use of the herbicide glyphosate.*
- (2) *Urges CEC Secretariat to initiate Article 13 report on hydro-fracking.*
- (3) *Produce an Article 13 report on the potential environmental benefits of renewable energy sources and distributed generation throughout North America.*
- (4) *Produce an Article 13 report on Traditional Ecological Knowledge as an initial product of the newly formed TEK expert group.*
- (5) *Consider a North American assessment of water as a trade resource and incorporate the concept of a product's 'water footprint' as an important component in the face of accelerating climate change.*

We agree with your recommendation to prioritize the demise of the monarch as well as to identify best practices to restore the iconic species. As a result *Project #12: Engaging Farmers and Other Landowners to Support Monarch Butterfly and Pollinator Conservation* and *Project #13: Monarch Butterfly Flyway: Communication, Participatory Conservation and Education program throughout the Migratory Route* both prioritize engagement and communication with farmers and others about their roles in its managements and conservation.

With regards to the recommendations on Article 13, the NAAEC is clear that Article 13 reports are initiated by the Secretariat, unless the Council objects, by two-thirds vote, to the preparation of such reports.

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**Recommendations on Charge Question 2 (NAPECA Grants):**

- (1) *The NAC respectfully recommends that the CEC set NAPECA priorities which reflect the cross-cutting themes of the 2015-2020 Strategic Plan, and select a focal area for a two to three year grant cycle, such as TEK or water resources in vulnerable communities.*

Thank you for this recommendation. The NAPECA 2015 Call for Proposals established a focus area for "Sustainable communities and urban initiatives" which we think is specific enough to support the 2015-2020 Strategic Plan and broad enough to include a wide range of community-level initiatives. Proponents are also encouraged to create informal partnerships, including at the indigenous community level, and identify the beneficiaries and target population of proposed projects.

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***Recommendations on Charge Question 3: Communication***

- (1) *The NAC respectfully recommends that the CEC identify selected target audiences who should be aware of, and involved in, the CEC's mission and who may benefit from its activities. Different communications techniques such as social media or radio may be needed to reach small, remote and vulnerable communities.*
- (2) *The NAC further recommends that the CEC communicate with law schools and policy NGOs specifically about the SEM process and encourage their engagement.*

As you are aware, the CEC is continuing to explore various avenues for communication and outreach to the public. We appreciate your advice in this area.

Again, thank you for your thoughtful advice. We look forward to further discussions to improve the impact of our trilateral cooperation.

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